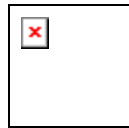


JERSEY MINERAL STUDY: PROGRESS REPORT

**Presented to the States on 7th December 1999
by the Planning and Environment Committee**



STATES OF JERSEY

STATES GREFFE

140

1999

R.C.44

Price code: B

JERSEY MINERAL STUDY: PROGRESS REPORT

Introduction

The purpose of this report is to update Members on the progress made with the Jersey Mineral Study. The study involves an examination of mineral supply options for the Island, with a view to establishing a policy framework/strategy for determining future mineral development proposals.

Consultation

On 23rd July 1999, all States Members were forwarded copies of the document entitled, "Jersey Mineral Study, Consultation Report", March 1999. This was prepared by Arup, on behalf of the Planning and Environment Committee, following extensive consultations with local mineral operators, building industry representatives, environmental groups and officers of the States of Jersey. There can be no doubt that the Arup study represents the most informative and comprehensive report on the subject to date.

The report puts forward **four scenarios**, which are capable of supplying the estimated potential future requirement for aggregates for the Island's construction industry, as follows -

Option 1: Maximise local supply

- involves - limited expansion of Ronez;
- expansion of La Gigoulande;
- continuation of Simon as long as ecologically feasible.

Option 2: Imports through St. Helier

- involves - limited expansion of Ronez;
- wind down production at La Gigoulande;
- wind down production at Simon;
- import large volumes of concreting aggregates (United Kingdom/France).

Option 3: Concentrate at Ronez

- involves - commitment to long term significant expansion at Ronez;
- increase sand imports;
- wind down production at La Gigoulande;
- wind down production at Simon.

Option 4: Create a new port at Ronez

- involves - wind down production at Ronez, La Gigoulande and Simon;
- develop all-weather importing facility at Ronez (i.e. with breakwater);
- import all aggregates via new port;
- transfer bulks and other construction materials from St. Helier to new port.

It also goes on to recommend a fifth option, which has been developed following extensive consultations with interested parties and a detailed evaluation of each of the above options. This seeks to maximise the advantages and minimise the disadvantages of the other options, as follows -

Preferred strategy: "sand imports only/long term port development"

- involves - continuing production at Ronez and La Gigoulande, allowing requested expansion;
- winding down Simon and arranging for the import of sand through St. Helier;
- Ronez developing a production strategy that leads to excavation of a dock basin from the base of the quarry for future importation of aggregates.

Results of the consultation

As a result of its public consultation the Committee received comments from 250 members of the public.

The clearest messages to emerge are that -

- a very high proportion of the respondents (62 per cent) indicated support for promoting more importation,

either immediately, or at some point in the future;

- by far the highest proportion of respondents who expressed a preference (51 per cent) opted for the Preferred Strategy. The only other option with a significant amount of support (22 per cent) is Scenario 4. Both options involve creating a new port a Ronez, albeit in different time frames;
- there was significant support for placing more emphasis on recycling materials and using secondary aggregates, notwithstanding that Arup has previously pointed out the limited opportunity for further gains in this area.

Two broad areas of concern about the study have also emerged from the consultation exercise, as follows -

- a number of respondents called into question the accuracy of the estimated potential future demand for aggregate, bearing in mind States' policies on population, the economy, sustainability etc.;
- some respondents expressed concerns, backed up by those of the Jersey Construction Forum and the Jersey Chamber of Commerce, that there is insufficient information (notably in relation to environmental impacts and capital and revenue costs) to allow for a rational evaluation of the options.

Arup has countered such arguments in the past by -

- referring to the considerable effort they have expended in estimating future demand for minerals, in consultation with relevant Public Services Department officials, mineral operators and representatives of private sector commerce and industry;
- emphasising the *strategic* nature of the study and pointing to the environmental and socio-economic factors which have been taken into account as an integral part of the study process.

The next step

It is clear from the Arup study and the findings of the public consultation exercise, that there is merit in, and support for, a future minerals strategy which works towards the importation of most aggregates and building materials at some point in the future and which, in the interim, continues to rely on extraction from local quarries.

Of the options for new importing facilities addressed by the study, the only one which appears to be worthy of further investigation is the Preferred Strategy (i.e. the excavation of Ronez Quarry with a view to creating a deep basin that would eventually be flooded and provided with a safely navigable entrance).

A further option, involving the creation of a new port south of La Collette emerged as a suggestion from the public consultation exercise, and has numerous attractions. However, the idea of extending the harbour south of the fuel berth for commercial traffic was investigated by Coode Blizard Ltd., on behalf of the States, during 1993 and 1994. Following navigation and wave disturbance studies, it was judged not to be viable.

Nevertheless, the Committee recently approached the Harbourmaster to make absolutely sure that using St. Helier harbour was out of the question. These discussions identified the possibility of using the existing tanker berth for bulk imports. The Harbourmaster has agreed that the feasibility of this option will be addressed by WSP International (formerly Coode Blizard Ltd.), as part of the on-going Port Masterplan Study.

In the circumstances, the Planning and Environment Committee has decided to defer presenting a recommended Mineral Strategy to the States, pending the initial findings of the Port Masterplan Study early in the New Year.

The Committee intends to consult the Harbours and Airport Committee, the Industries Committee and its Constructions Industry Board.